

Summary of Lincoln Operational and Management Standards for Public Swimming Pools

The Lincoln Operational and Management Standards for Public Swimming Pools (hereafter: Lincoln Standards) establish requirements for the day to day operation and management of all public swimming pools in the City of Lincoln. The Lincoln Standards provide pool operating standards, including acceptable pool water chemistry parameters; pool staffing and supervision requirements; physical plant standards; and conditions that necessitate pool closings. To a large extent, the Lincoln Standards are consistent with the existing Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 178 NAC 2 Operation and Maintenance of Public Swimming Pools (hereafter: State Regulations). As such, the Lincoln Standards provide for conventional safety standards and practices at public pools being enforced at the local level.

Examples of existing safety equipment requirements at public pools:

- Class A facilities must provide rescue tubes and a backboard with three straps.
- Class B and F pools must provide a ring buoy with an attached rope as well as a shepherd's crook.
- All pool classes must provide an emergency telephone for use in the event of an emergency.
- Pool facilities which utilize gas or propane to heat pool water or a pool enclosure must install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors.

Examples of existing facility standards and practices include:

- Maintaining depth markers on vertical and horizontal surfaces so that pool depth is readily identifiable.
- Insuring that recirculation equipment indicators such as flow meters and pressure gauges are functioning properly.
- Providing a sanitary swimming environment by maintaining prescribed water chemistry parameters (e.g. adequate chlorine and an appropriate pH level).
- Testing and recording water chemistry at specified intervals.

There are several significant differences between Lincoln Standards and State Regulations. The Lincoln Standards provide: 1) enhanced pool operational staffing requirements; 2) a secondary disinfection standard for spray parks; 3) improved lifeguard staffing at Class B and F pools that elect to provide lifeguards. The proceeding sections describe these items in more detail.

Pool Operational Staffing Requirements

Public pools must be under the supervision of a Lincoln Swimming Pool Operator who possesses a certificate of competency and is registered with the Health Department to practice in the City of Lincoln. The Lincoln Standards also require that any other persons who are responsible for testing pool water to undergo training and testing to obtain a

certificate of competency to become a Lincoln Pool Water Quality Tester. This is necessary as currently there is no training and testing requirement for staff that assist the designated pool operator in this capacity. A person who obtains a Lincoln Pool Water Quality Tester certificate of competency must register with the Health Department to perform this function. The registration aspect provides a mechanism for the Health Department to suspend or revoke a Lincoln Swimming Pool Operator or Lincoln Pool Water Quality Tester certificate of registration for serious and repeated violations of swimming pool regulations that may cause an imminent health risk.

The Lincoln Standards address a shortfall in State Regulations that allows facilities with multiple pool types at one location to keep some pools open, even in the absence of a qualified operator. For example, a local apartment community may operate, at one location, a Class B swimming pool, a Class C spa and a Class E wading pool. Under current regulations, if the apartment community does not have a qualified operator, only the Class B pool is closed from public use. The Class C spa and Class E wading pool would remain open for public use. Regardless of the type of pool, the lack of a qualified operator jeopardizes public health and safety. Thus, it is necessary to require all pool types to be under the supervision of Lincoln Swimming Pool Operator that has earned a certificate of competency and is registered with the Health Department to perform pool operation and management functions.

Secondary Disinfection Standard for Spray Parks

The Lincoln Standards require all Class E pools (spray parks) that recirculate water to spray features to meet a secondary disinfection standard to achieve a 3-log reduction (99.9%) of *Cryptosporidium* oocysts. Outbreaks of recreational water illness are often caused by *Cryptosporidium* and have been conclusively linked to spray parks. Spray park patrons are typically toddlers and young children who may not be potty trained. A fecal incident at a spray park can expose hundreds of patrons to pathogens and cause serious illness. Because *Cryptosporidium* is highly resistant to chlorine, a secondary disinfection standard is necessary to protect public health. To meet this requirement, facilities will most likely utilize Ultra Violet technology which is readily available for swimming pool applications.

Lifeguard Staffing Requirements at Class B and F Pools

Class B and F pool facilities, such as neighborhood associations and health clubs, may elect to provide lifeguards as a benefit to their patrons. The Lincoln Standards require Class B and F pools to meet the same lifeguard staffing requirements as Class A pools. This includes providing one lifeguard on duty per each 1-100 bathers and to provide a sufficient number of lifeguards to permit periodic relief or rest periods. In addition, all pools must provide a lifeguard chair for each 2,000 feet of water surface area.